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OR

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For the Evening Fire-side.

Essay in favour of Learning, by R****** P***** *of Philadelphia.*

Doctrina sed vim promovet insitam,
Rectique cultus pectora roborant; &c.
HORACE.

Get learning, search it wheresoe'er you can;
This from the brute discriminates the man; &c.
Earl of Orrery.

Man is a compound of body and mind; e former he has in common with the aſt; it is only in the latter that he is fu- rior to the brute creation; and the more in proportion to his improvement of it: which the Author of his exiſtence has ndered him capable, by means of learn- g, in its general ſenſe; which he has nnected with induſtry and labour, placed his power, and pointed out to his under- nding, for the cultivation and advance- nt of his intellectual abilities; and ough the brute creation itſelf is not en- ely deſtitute of this, yet they enjoy it ly in an inferior degree. For the parent ute inſtructs the young; and the God of ture communicates learning and know- ge, in different manner and degree, ei- r immediately, or inſtrumentally, to all ſenſible and intelligent creatures, in the ſt proper and extenſive acceptation of term; nay, even ſometimes ſo far as to der the lower inſtructive to the higher k of created beings; as the poet inti- tes in the following lines:

hus then to Man the voice of Nature spake;
from the creatures thy instructions take;
n from the birds what food the thickets yield,
n from the beasts the physic of the field:
arts of building from the bee receive,
n of the mole to plow, the worm to weave," &c.
* * * *
re subterraneous works and cities see,
re towns aerial on the waving tree.
n each small people's genius, policies,
ant's republic and the realm of bees," &c.
POPE.

But let it be duly and properly conſidered, what exceeding great difference the inſtruction of learning and knowledge makes among mankind, or between the higheſt and loweſt of thoſe, who are particularly called rational creatures, in reſpect to mental excellence, ability and felicity! The diſparity between the loweſt of what is called the rational ſpecies, and the higheſt rank among the brutes, is probably, not ſo great as that which is ſo conſpicuous in the different degrees of the former, by means of a wiſe and virtuous education, for the advancement of real and uſeful knowledge, virtuous habits, and a more ſublime happineſs of mind. From hence let a proper eſtimate be placed on what ſo frequently and eminently makes this difference, or cauſes this excellence, and ſo exceedingly advances mankind in the ſcale of beings; and let a juſt and due application be uſed for the poſſeſſion of it, in preference to any inferior thing. For which purpoſe it is neceſſary to guard againſt the inſinuations of the enemies of learning, but chiefly thoſe of its grand adverſary, which is ignorance; for as it is the nature and property of ignorance to detract from, and endeavour to debaſe whatever weakens its kingdom, reign or power, ſo learning has no greater enemy than ignorance, though generally under very different and plauſible names. This is very remarkably ſeen and obſerved in the detractors from learning, both among religious bigots, under ſpecious pretences, and alſo the immoral profligates, as well as the ſtupidly low and uninformed, and though the former contend for ignorance in a line of apparent ſerioufneſs, which therefore much more plauſibly takes with divers of the *well-meaning*, under the faireſt and moſt ſpecious pretences, but falſe reaſoning; yet, as even this has a moſt certain tendency to introduce idleneſs, indolence, and a contractedneſs of mind, with a torpid inactivity of the mental faculties, the natural offſpring of ignorance and pride; it is, therefore, as well as the other, of moſt pernicious conſequence, and ought to be expelled as much as poſſible, from human ſociety, as being ultimately the bane of all improvement. The latter is too deformed and nauſeous to be openly, or profeſſedly embraced by any but the moſt abandoned, or unthinking mortals, and therefore not quite ſo dangerous as the former; yet it may be ſaid reſpecting them both, ſo far as they pretend to what they have no proper and juſt claim, in diſcouraging induſtry and labour of mind, and by contemning and rejecting the true means of mental improvement and felicity under contrary pretences,

——" nulla diu ſimulatio durat,
Agnina ſub pelle latens vulpecula tandem
Proditur indiciis propriis," &c.

" False coverings ne'er can long conceal;
True nature will itſelf reveal,
At laſt," &c.

When this is well underſtood and conſidered by the intelligent and ingenious mind, let not the thief, the robber, the abandoned follower of vice and wickedneſs be more diligent, take more pains, or uſe more labour and attention, more aſſiduity and invention to accompliſh his ends, to violate the intereſt of the common good, and finally to render himſelf miſerable, than we do, who are candidates of better knowledge, and ſuperior excellency, to exalt and improve our mental faculties, by thoſe means, which the Author of Nature has placed in our power, and clearly pointed out to us for that purpoſe; and to raiſe our better parts above the ſordid purſuits of the loweſt of mankind, to a more refined and elevated happineſs, inſtead of indulging idleneſs and falſe reaſoning. No, let every conſiderate mind, every rational and thinking perſon, who is ſenſible of the ſuperiority of his rank in the chain of nature, or of his degree in the ſcale of exiſtence, inſtead of favouring ignorance and indolence, and reaping the baneful conſequences, rather apply himſelf with all his might to riſe from the duſt of the earth, to exercile his mind, and to labour for the further im-

provement of his intellectual powers, and his advancement in the degrees of superior felicity and utility above the vulgar pursuits of common life, which so much engross the grovelling minds of many low thinking mortals, so far as Divine Wisdom has given them means and ability for that purpose;—not indulging pride; or conceitedness, the genuine offspring of ignorance, not of true learning, which teaches condescention, deference to others, and a humble deportment in life and behaviour, but not mean and servile, &c.

Quanto sis doctior tanto sis submissior.
CICERO.

But more especially let those, who are young in years, endeavour, while they have time and power, to cultivate and improve their minds with good and early instruction, to habituate themselves to virtuous ways, and to inform their understanding in learning and science, or wisdom, which includes all good things, and in its universal or most extensive sense and true meaning, is that most excellent gift of God to the industrous among men, to promote the happiness and excellency of the human race;—and though it consists of many parts, or various degrees, yet, as Solomon says, "*Timor Jehovæ caput Scientiæ*, the fear of the Lord Jehovah is the beginning or head of it:—let us detest and decline all idleness and sloth of mind, which impedes this; for, as Horace says,

"*Vitanda improba siren desidia.*" *Sat Lib* 2.

and as this author, in another place further expresses, let it be remembered,

———"*Nil sine magno*
Vita labore dedit mortalibus." *Sat. Lib.* 1.

Finally, let us use all means in our power for the noble end; for improving that excellent talent which God has given, to raise us above the brute, and to meliorate our nature;—and notwithstanding what idleness and ignorance may say or object, let us be assured, that, as John Earl of Orrery, in his excellent observations on Pliny's Epistles, addressed to his son Charles, (Lord Boyle) says, "*learning cannot be acquired too soon, or sought after too extensively.*

Get knowledge, search it wheresoe'er you can;
This from the brute discriminates the man, &c.
ORRERY.

And again,

"Let each fair morn some manly object bring,
And keep the tow'ring fancy on the wing.
Let not that spark of light, that heav'nly ray,
Sleep unimprov'd in clods of sordid clay.
Behold this curse attending human race,
If they neglect their reason, or debase,
Folly and vice shall ev'ry pow'r controul,
Deform the body and pollute the soul,
Obstruct at once great Nature's ablest plan
And in the child of ease degrade the man.

Note. That curious instrument or machine, called an Orrery, takes its name from this nobleman.

For the Evening Fire-side.

SONNET TO DARKNESS.

Thou gloomy, shapeless power, that dwells
O'er all creation round!
Where, when the sun's meridian beam,
Dances upon the glitt'ring stream,
In caves remote or silent dells,
Canst thou be found?

Dost thou dissolve in liquid air,
Or seek some stygian gloom,
Where flit the unsubstantial hosts,
Of phantoms dire or bleeding ghosts,
Or where the demons of despair,
Yell from the tomb?

Enough for me that thou before the day
Gradual retires, and slowly stalks away.
LYRICUS.

To the Editors of the Evening Fire-side.

"He that's convinc'd against his will,
Is of the same opinion still."

A great part of our disputes, arise from a wrong conception of each others expressions; or from an unwillingness to give them their due when rightly understood.—LOGICUS does not deny that a way has been shown, by which we acquire an idea of the Deity, other than by immediate revelation. But adheres to his former position, because he is more pleased that the idea should be acquired that way than any other; and insists on its being proven, that some disadvantage would result to society from the prevalence of that opinion, before he will relinquish it. Should any one undertake to disprove the Newtonian doctrine concerning the laws of matter; or deny the explanation of planetary revolutions, and assert that the Sun revolves round the Earth, instead of the Earth round the Sun, and in support thereof say—"if you can make it obvious to my understanding that any *material* disadvantage would arise to the best interests of society from the general prevalence of the opinion I advanced, I am ready to recant," would it not be considered as a very flimsy support of the rectitude of his assertion? Yet this is what LOGICUS insists on. It was not intended to show the disadvantages resulting from the opinion he advanced in his former essay, but merely to expose its fallacy.

LOGICUS says, "I cannot conceive by the slender powers which I possess, why it must necessarily follow, because we communicate our ideas to others through the medium of the senses, that therefore they cannot be received through any other medium; neither can I discover how it comes to pass, that it is through their medium alone that our own ideas are made serviceable to ourselves." In the first place I ask "why may we not receive all our ideas through the medium of the senses, since it must be through their medium that all our ideas are communicated to the world." But do not assert "that *therefore* they cannot be received through any other medium?" Though I believe they *are not*. Secondly, admitting an idea acquired by another medium,—still it can only be rendered serviceable to us by our other ideas, which were previously acquired through the medium of the senses; since, concerning any such idea "our assent can be rationally no higher than the *evidence* of its being a revelation, and that this is the *meaning* of the expression is delivered in."* Now, that we do not deceive ourselves on these points, depends upon the exertion of reason to discover the agreement or disagreement between the ideas as so impressing us, and certain known truths. Why then suppose an idea supernaturally impressed on the mind, the truthfulness of which is only made known by ideas acquired by sensation and reflection?

LOGICUS appeals to every *thinking* man whether they have not felt "an impression which carries its own evidence, and convinces the understanding without the aid of reason." In like manner if any one should tell him, that without wings he could fly to the moon, LOGICUS would perceive *understand* what was said; but would *reason* suffer him to assent to it? If he would believe every thing of which his "understanding was convinced," without bringing it to the test of reason, he might assent to opinions diametrically opposite, since, if they were related with equal clearness he would understand the one as well as the other, however opposed they might be to each other facts. Further he says, "it is upon the evidence of this principle" (or impression which he uses as synonimous) "that all religion is founded and supported, and not at all on that of reason." Then there is no

* LOCKE.

ſoning upon religion, and it will be impoſſible to convince a gainſayer, or to do away any enthuſiaſtic opinion, however abſurd.

CLIO.

For the Evening Fire-side.

To the Editors.

It is obſervable that in productions of literary ingenuity, thoſe which are purſued without any previous plan, are liable to many imperfections which would naturally be ſuperceded by the adoption of a regular ſyſtem. But when any plan is formed to regulate the pen of the writer, if it be not ſtrictly adhered to, the performance will inevitably be ſubjected to greater inconſiſtancies than if the author had been influenced by the impulſe of the moment, or roved at pleaſure through the fields of fancy or the walks of literature, without being fettered by a previouſly adopted ſyſtem. Any deviation from the line preſcribed at firſt ſetting out, will be viewed by the critic as a departure from the rules of propriety.—From the *inſignia* choſen by your philanthropic correſpondent, a perſon would naturally be inclined to ſuppoſe that his diſſertations would have been directed to ſuch local circumſtances in life, as would have rendered his obſervations practically uſeful. To point out the inconveniences of certain modes of life, and to ſhew the ſure methods of alleviating the misfortunes incident to humanity. But behold him deſcanting upon the vices of the age, and giving moral lectures on abſtract ſubjects! "*It is the misfortune of thoſe plans which embrace too great a portion of human good*, that they are not reducible to practice." I recollect to have ſomewhere read of a certain *Coſmopolitan*, who diſdained to ſtoop to the inferior offices of benefiting thoſe of his kindred, and acquaintance, who came immediately under his notice, and to whom he had it in his power to be uſeful; but was reſolved to embrace the whole human race; and make all mankind happy at once by the exerciſe of his *univerſal philanthropy*. He was for reforming upon an extenſive plan, which would *rectify all abuſes*, and put every thing to rights, at one *vaſt ſweep*. The conſequence was, he ſpent his life in idle inſignificance without being uſeful to any—a mere cypher in the creation. His vaſt ſchemes exceeded the poſſibility of accompliſhment," they were not reducible to practice. He had never been convinced of this obvious truth, that human life is made up of trifles, and that all great objects are brought about by the ſteady application of apparently inſignificant means. Perſeverance, by gently removing one obſtacle after another, overcomes all oppoſition. I admire the talents of your correſpondent, and believe if he could be induced to change his *theoretical* for *practical Philanthropy*, he would not only be more pleaſing and inſtructive to your readers, but might thereby become the inſtrument of good to many.—As he does not appear *tenacious*, I conceived that an epiſtle directed to him, containing ſuch remarks on his numbers as ſhould occur, would not be conſidered *impertinent*. But conſtruing his late abſence for ſeveral weeks, from the dignified ſtation which he filled in your paper, as preſaging his final departure, I concluded it would be moſt adviſeable to addreſs my obſervations to you. In his firſt number, after making ſome ſpeculative remarks on ſociety at large, which evinced that he was poſſeſſed of a ſenſibility capable of being wounded by the follies of his ſpecies, he dropped a hint about "*Genius*," which drew an epiſtle from another correſpondent who eſpouſed the cauſe of "*equal mental endowments*." The ſubſequent conteſt between him and his female opponent, occupied for ſome time the attention of your readers. In every conteſted point, the object of the parties ſhould be to convince or be convinced. For this purpoſe, ſuch arguments ſhould be advanced, as are moſt convincing, unattended by any aſperity of remark, or illiberal criticiſms on each other's performance. As, your correſpondents appear to have been governed by a deſire for the "promulgation of truth," or the "diſſemination of uſeful knowledge," a further diſcuſſion of this ſubject would have been intereſting to ſome of your unprejudiced readers. It is a point upon which Philoſophers have diſagreed; and will admit of many rational arguments on both ſides. That there is an apparent difference in the abilities of men, none will pretend to deny; but the cauſe of this difference is not ſo eaſily aſcertained. Do not all men poſſeſs the ſame faculties, paſſions, and affections? and are not all thoſe who are termed *rational*, capable of reaſoning in a greater or leſs degree? Are not all ſubject to the influence of *Hope*, *Fear*, *Anger*, *Love*, and all the various paſſions incident to the human mind? If all poſſeſs them, in what do they differ but in the ſtrength of thoſe faculties, or paſſions? Does not the application of our faculties increaſe their ſtrength in proportion to our induſtry and exertion, provided they are not overſtrained? If the primary difference between man and man conſiſts in the relative ſtrength of their rational faculties; and if their ſtrength is increaſed in proportion to our application and diligence, it amounts to a ſtrong preſumption that education, or our own voluntary mental exertions make greater diſtinctions in ſociety than Nature does. On the other hand, if we were at liberty to open the pages of Scripture, perhaps we might find ſomething in the parable of the talents, which would operate in favour of *Native Genius*; but it is a ſealed book: ſealed to the *Logician*, the *Philoſopher*, and *man of Science*; acceſſible only to the *Chriſtian* and the *Divine*; we ſhall therefore ſay nothing about it, but paſs it by in "*ſilence*," and proceed to obſerve what the PHILANTHROPIST ſays about *Friendſhip*.—He has aſſerted it to be totally unworthy of our regard; nay, he has placed it in ſo deformed a view, as to render it deteſtable. But like EVANGELICUS, he has drawn all his arguments, to prove friendſhip a groveling paſſion, from ſcripture. Are the ſacred writings to be reſorted to, to prove a poſition in morality or metaphyſicks? Why not alſo prove from ſcripture that the *ſun* performs its revolution round the earth in twenty-four hours, ſince we find that to be the prevailing opinion amongſt the writers of theſe books, as will appear from many paſſages in them. Thoſe men who wrote the ſcriptures were no *Philoſophers*. They were patterns worthy of imitation in that which is infinitely more precious than *Philoſophy* or *Science*. But many of them were ignorant and illiterate men. Their greateſt ambition was to be found in the performance of their duty, and to obtain the approbation of their God. But their attention does not appear to have been turned to ſcience or literature. Let us follow them in matters of religion; but in ſcience or philoſophy, I would prefer the authority of thoſe who *have at leaſt made it their ſtudy*. It is as abſurd to fly to ſcripture to prove a poſition in *philoſophy*, as to refer to Murray's grammar for proof that the three angles of a right lined triangle are equal to two right angles. It is the *Chriſtian's* guide; not the *Philoſopher's*; though *chriſtianity* and *philoſophy* are by no means incompatible. If *friendſhip* and *vice* go hand in hand, as the PHILANTHROPIST ſuppoſes they may, they muſt be alike. I would underſtand from their going hand in hand, their acting together and producing the ſame effect. I cannot conceive that two natural cauſes which are eſſentially different, can act in concert. Therefore, as *friendſhip* and *vice* conſpire together to produce the ſame effect, their natures muſt be the ſame; con-

ſequently *friendſhip* is a *vice*; and if ſo it muſt render its poſſeſſor deſpicable in the eyes of the world. How different this from the opinion I had always entertained, that friendſhip ranked high amongſt the virtues of the human heart: that next to an approving conſcience, it was the ſource of our greateſt conſolation in affliction.—I would not forego the pleaſures derived from friendſhip, for all the wealth of India. But if the PHILANTHROPIST ſays it is a vice, who am I that I ſhould gainſay him? That friendſhip which terminates in any ſiniſter views, is not deſerving the name; it is not friendſhip, it is ſycophancy. In baniſhing this virtue from the human heart, the PHILANTHROPIST has not left it quite deſtitute, but has ſubſtituted ſomething in its place, which he calls Love. If he had drawn a line, and ſhown where friendſhip ends, and love begins, it would have been much eaſier for me to determine how far we differ in opinion.

The length of this eſſay has already extended beyond my intentions, I ſhall therefore only obſerve, that in the PHILANTHROPSIT'S laſt number I could not diſcover any traces of *philanthropy*. It would in my opinion have been better appropriated to the general tenure of his remarks, if he had changed his *inſigne* for that of DECLAIMER. His obſervations were directed againſt the follies of the great, which were very juſt. I do not mean to call in queſtion his claim to "*truth's fair laurel*;" but his *philanthropy* I could not deſcry.

I have now only to requeſt your forbearance of cenſure on account of the prolixity of theſe remarks, and aſſure you of the conſtant good wiſhes of

PHILETUS.

For the Evening Fire-ſide.

SONNET TO THE TURTLE-DOVE.

Sweet plaintive tenant of the grove,
Thy melancholy notes can charm,
The ſorrows of deſponding love,
And baniſh every wild alarm.

I love to hear thee, when the beam
Of Phœbus bids me ſeek the ſhade;
And here beſide the babbling ſtream,
I woo the viſionary maid.

Reſponſive echo oft replies,
Prolonging thus thy penſive ſtrain;
While round the ſilver deities,
In ſilence hold their peaceful reign.

Who would not melancholy be,
To ſing, ſweet plaintive bird, like thee.

LYRICUS.

For the Evening Fire-ſide.

Meſſieurs Editors,

Permit me to congratulate my friend PROBE on the proſpect of a new recruit for our forces, which are to take the field againſt thoſe modern Goths and Vandals; viz. the higher branches of Literature.—Your ſpirited Correſpondent, DECLAIMER, from the ſpecimen of his abilities exhibited in his No. 1. will undoubtedly become one of our moſt valuable auxiliaries. He appears ſo poſſeſs that wordy ſpunk which is ſo ſerviceable in conteſt, and which is not to be ſilenced even by defeat.—Such a recruit will be truly acceptable; and I hope PROBE will ſecure him by enliſting him in our ranks. It is true that PROBE has not ſignified a deſign of proſecuting the warfare farther than the demolition of the ſtudy of the dead languages; but I think when he ſees valiant troops flocking to his ſtandard he will extend his ideas much farther. The DECLAIMER has been bold and candid on the occaſion; he tells us that "*a moderate ſhare of information*" is much the beſt, and moſt conducive to happineſs. Now I dare ſay he knows this to be true from experience, and therefore we ought to repoſe the more confidence in his aſſertion. I am decidedly of opinion that if we unite our ſtrength and overturn all ſyſtems of education which extend higher than the diſſemination of a "moderate ſhare" of knowledge, we ſhall do mankind a ſervice, by compelling them to remain within the confines of happineſs. With the aſſiſtance of DECLAIMER, PROBE and I would make ſuch lads as Swammerdam and Linnæus "roam through fens and ditches" on *other errands* than the promotion of Natural Hiſtory. We would let them know that "mediocrity in knowledge is the ſafeſt ſtation" for them; and that a knowledge of the manual exerciſe of ſpades and ſhovels is the beſt thing they can "ſearch" in "fens and ditches." What have mankind to do with the productions of Nature? A man wants nothing in this world but a little to eat, drink, and wear—and the leſs he knows, the *happier* and *ſafer* he is. The opinion that "our happineſs increaſes with our knowledge," does indeed "ſhock all common ſenſe," as the poet ſays. Suppoſe the "ſimple ruſtic" to have five *ideas*, and the Philoſopher fifty; it is plain, (as unhappineſs is all *ideal*,) that the philoſopher has ten chances for being miſerable where the "ruſtic" has but one. Who will be ſo obſtinate as to contend for the cauſe of learning after ſuch a demonſtration? I hope to ſhow the world in my *Treatiſe on the Virtuous effects of Ignorance*, (a work which I have to write yet,) that knowledge and virtue are by nature incompatible. In a chapter on the beſt method of retrograding ſociety to the ſavage ſtate, I propoſe to inſert ſome knock-down arguments to prove that it is only in the "ſimple" wild ſtate of nature that real virtue is to be met with. I mention this at preſent merely to convince PROBE and the DECLAIMER of my zeal in the preſent conteſt; and hope they may hold on their way as nobly as they have begun.

BISTOURI.

April 3d, 1806.

For the Evening Fire-ſide.

Meſſrs. Editors,

The communication of your anonymous correſpondent, and his obſervations on the queſtion of ANTI-PHYSICO-MATHEMATICUS, are certainly deſerving the appellation of *Ingenious*. His inventive faculties were wonderfully diſplayed in the introduction of *learned* words into his piece; which, in the manner he uſed them, conveyed little or no meaning; but were merely words without ideas. In his pompous method of anſwering the queſtion, he gives it no anſwer at all. His ſcholaſtic diſſertation would not have been thought of ſufficient importance, to claim the attention of ANTI-PHISICO, as neither reaſon nor argument are to be found in his piece. But obſerving in your laſt number, a literal ſolution given to the queſtion, by one who, I doubt not, poſſeſſes abilities to reconcile the enigma, but who does not appear to have fairly underſtood the deſign of the queſtion: I conceive ſomething further by way of explanation to be proper. It was not required to know how far the gooſe and the frog would run before they would come in *contact*; as this could eaſily be done by plain arithmetic, without the aid of mathematics; neither was it deſigned to prove that the gooſe would actually overtake, and paſs by the frog; for every perſon's own underſtanding will convince them upon a moment's reflection, that it would certainly take place. But this circumſtance was brought as a plain caſe in which the falſity of a certain mode of reaſoning was ſhown, a caſe wherein mathematical demonſtration was uſed to prove a thing true, which is abſolutely falſe; and muſt appear ſo to every body. It was not my intention to deny the uſe of mathematical reaſoning, in *general*, or to call in queſtion its claim to truth

ay, verily; that would be a vain attempt me. It is certainly entitled to the particular attention of every lover of ſcience. have derived more pleaſure from the ſtudy f mathematical problems, than from the urſuit of any other branch of ſcientific nquiry. The certain evidence which geoetrical demonſtrations give of the truth of ch propoſition thus proved, conveys a tional pleaſure to the ſtudious mind, enrges the underſtanding, ſtrengthens the dgment, improves and hightens the taſte r literary purſuits, and brightens the raonal faculties. But I would willingly be ade to comprehend with equal clearneſs, her demonſtrations uſed to prove things hich appear impoſſible. If the infinite viſibility of matter be admitted, it will eceſſarily follow, that the doctrine of inite ſeries, and other enigmatical poſitions uſt be correct. There certainly is a point eyond which matter cannot be diviſible. et, as this point is beyond the reach of e ſenſes, and ſcarcely to be conceived by e underſtanding, it has been termed inite; but any thing which can be limitted certainly finite.

It appears to me that many propoſitions milar to that mentioned in my laſt, have en *fairly proved true* in theory, which are actically impoſſible. The deſign of the ueſtion was to give your learned correſndenſts an opportunity of reconciling this eming inconſiſtency in ſome caſes, in the de of reaſoning uſed by men of ſcience their ſpeculative enquiries.

ANTI-PHISICO-MATHEMATICUS.

Selected for the Evening Fire-side.

THE NAME UNKNOWN,

itated from Klopstocks's ode to his future mistress By Thomas Campbell, Esq. author of the Pleasures of Hope.

Prophetic pencil, wilt thou trace,
A faithful image of the face:
Or wilt thou write the name unknown,
Ordain'd to rule my charmed soul,
And all my future fate controul,
Unrival'd and alone!

Delicious idol of my thought!
Though sylph or spirit never taught
My boding heart thy simple name;
Yet musing on my distant fate,
To charms unseen I consecrate,
A visionary flame!

Thy rosy blush and meaning eye,
Thy virgin voice of melody,
Are ever present to my heart;
Thy murmur'd vows shall yet be mine,
My thrilling hand shall meet with thine,
And never—never part!

Then fly, my days, on rapid wing,
Till love the viewless treasure bring;
While I, like conscious Athens, own
A power in mystic silence seal'd,
A guardian angel unreveal'd—
And bless the Name Unknown.

ON THE EOLIAN HARP.

While beneath the moon's dim ray,
Waves in peace the silent grove;
What sounds along the valley play,
These fairy strings what fingers move?

Wak'd by breath of vernal breezes,
Swell on high the magic notes;
Ever varying, still it pleases,
While on air the music floats.

Where the moon-beam trembling lights,
Shining on the sylphic ring,
Move quick or slow, the airy sprites,
With the wildly sounding string.

When touch'd by ruder gales, the lyre
Majestic sounds in tones sublime;
While fancy, warm'd with kindred fire,
Looks back on deeds of ancient time;

Glowing with the martial sound,
I long for glory to engage;
To deal the deadly blow around,
With heroes of a former age.

But, lo! the strains so solemn, slow,
Seem like the dirges of the slain!
Sudden change my warmth to woe,
And bring reflection's sober train.

And now, by softer breath inspir'd,
The broken murmurs falter love,
And call to scenes of peace retir'd,
Hesperia's Bower, Arcadia's Grove.

Such sounds sweet Melancholy loves,
As near the lonely tower she treads;
While wrapt in thought she slowly moves,
And hears them rise amid the glades.

Such, in Imagination's ear,
Would be the wild melodious strain,
Did she, t' excite the pleasing tear,
In soft and mournful notes complain.

O'er my melting bosom pour'd,
Emotions sad, yet soothing rise,
As deep and low the note is heard,
Or quivering in the gale it dies.

Thus all human grandeur flies,
Proud with the song of public praise;
With passing breath the strains arise,
But with the breath the song decays.

Account of the Black Hole at Calcutta.

Black Hole is a dungeon, ſo called, in Fort William, Calcutta, meaſuring only eighteen feet ſquare, in which Mr. Holwell and one hundred and forty-five brave men exhauſted by fatigue, and a vigorous defence againſt a ſuperior force, were immured, by order of the Subah or Viceroy of Bengal, in the year 1756, during a ſultry cloſe night, which he who has melted under that debilitating climate, may be allowed the unenvied merit of accurately deſcribing. Such a number of unhappy men, encloſed and preſſed together, in ſo narrow a ſpace, is not to be imagined or deſcribed without horror, it was a night of ſuffocation, languor, delirium, and death; eſcape or relief was impoſſible, as immenſe pecuniary offers had been made to the guard, if they would report their ſituation, but the only anſwer was, that no one could preſume to wake the Subah, on pain of death.

Water, in ſuch inadequate quantities as the grating of the windows would admit of, was conveyed to them in hats, by the humanity of an old centinel; but this refreſhment ſo precious, was found, after a momentary alleviation, to conſiderably aggravate their complaints; and, like other comforts of human life, was alſo embittered with the reflection, that it could not be ſhared by their remote companions, whoſe repeated cries for water, and ineffectual ſtruggles to reach it, ſerved only to diminiſh their remaining ſtrength; while the kind hand of death was every moment leſſening the number of miſerable creatures, who experienced relief from ſwallowing, and (in the caſe of Mr. Holwell, from whom I relate the circumſtance) *ſharing* the copious perſpiration of their neighbours. They alſo attempted, by repeated intreaties, as well as by provocation, to induce the commanding officer of the guard, to fire on them, and at once conclude their miſeries. No reader can wiſh to dwell on the ſhocking and nauſeating deſcription of a horrid charnel houſe, crouded with bodies of the dead and dying. After a night, which realized or ſurpaſſed the torments and agonies of hell, the door which opened inwards, was unbolted, and as ſoon as the putrid heap, which prevented its opening, was removed by their almoſt expiring aſſociates, of one hundred and forty-ſix perſons, only twenty-three crawled forth from this cavern of death!

Such was the fate of the gallant Engliſh factory, occaſioned by the reſentment of the natives againſt the oppreſſions and enormities of Drake, a late governor of Calcutta, who after raiſing a ſtorm, had baſely quitted his poſt, and left men, whoſe bravery ought to have excited admiration and eſteem in an enemy, to the ſupine cruelty of an unfeeling Subah, who, while Mr. Holwell was relating their ſufferings, ſtopt

him ſhort, by ſaying, in a ſtern manner, "I am well aſſured there was treaſure in the fort; unleſs it is inſtantly given up, expect no mercy;"—this inſult was intolerable from a tyrant who had ſhewn none, who was a cool, deliberate murderer, as it afterwards appeared, that the priſoners were driven into the black hole, by his expreſs direction, and expecting what would happen, that he had given poſitive orders, not to be diſturbed, during the night.—This memorable tragedy, has made a deep, perhaps a uſeful impreſſion on my mind; reflecting on the diſmal cataſtrophe, I have converted it into a ſource of comparative comfort. When my temples have throbbed with the irritation of a burning fever, when the wounds of calamity have been exaſperated by inſidious enemies, or ill-judging friends, when my mind agitated in a ſtorm of hopes and fears, was ſinking into deſpair, I have often caſt a thought on the ſufferers at Calcutta, compared their miſeries with my own, breathed forth a thankful ejaculation to the Almighty, and almoſt ceaſed to be wretched.

[*The Lounger's Common Place-Book.*]

By a Student at Cambridge, Eng.

From off that delicate fair cheek,
Oh maid, too fair, I did but ſeek
To ſteal a kiss, and lo! your face,
With anger or with ſhame it glows;
What have I done, my gentle grace,
But change a lily to a roſe?

At once your cheek and brow were flush'd,
Your neck and e'en your boſom blush'd;
And ſhame may claim the larger part,
In that ſmooth neck, and all above:
But let the bluſh ſo near the heart,
Oh! let it be a bluſh of love.
Pygmalion thus lit up with life,
The ſtatue that became his wife.

AMERICAN INQISITIVENESS.

A gentleman who has travelled through moſt parts of North-America, obſerves, that wherever you bend your courſe, to whomſoever you addreſs yourſelf, you are inſenſibly ſubject to good humoured, ineffective, but very troubleſome inquiſitions. Do you enquire your road, you are anſwered by a queſtion—"I ſuppoſe you come from the eaſtward, don't you?" Oppreſſed with fatigue, hunger, and thirſt, and drenched, perhaps, with rain, you anſwer ſhortly in the affirmative, and repeat your enquiry: "Methinks you are in a mighty haſte: what news are there to the eaſtward?" This is the only ſatisfaction you can obtain, till you have opened your real or pretended budget of news, and gratified the demander's curioſity. At an inn, the ſcrutiny is more minute: your name, quality, and place of departure, and object of your journey, muſt all be declared to the family in ſome way or other (for their credulity is equal to their curioſity) before you can ſit down in comfort to your neceſſary refreſhment.

This curious ſpirit is intolerable in the eaſtern ſtates; and the gentleman who has favoured us with this article, has heard the celebrated Dr. Franklin, who is himſelf a Boſtonian, relate with great pleaſantry, that in travelling, when he was young, the firſt ſtep he took for his tranquility, and to obtain immediate attention at theſe inns, was to anticipate inquiry, by ſaying, "My name is Benjamin Franklin, I was born at Boſton, am a printer by profeſſion, am travelling to Philadelphia, ſhall return at ſuch a time, and have no news—now what can you give me for dinner?"

From the Literary Magazine.

PETER POETASTER'S
Notification Recommendatory
of the article AMERICAN LETTERS in
THE BOSTON REVIEW.

(Concluded from our laſt.)

"He ſpeaks of Tivoli," ſays the learned Reviewer, "as if its peculiarity conſiſted in its having once been a ſplendid city, and *not* in the claſſical remembrance of the ſweet retirement of *Horace*, where he ſpent ſuch merry times with Mæcenas; *nor* in the ſplendour and magnificence of the villas of Lucullus and *Adrian*."

In this *ſingle* item I cannot agree with the learned Critic, as the Author (with all his overſight) certainly quotes the *very ſame* dull paſſage of Horace, which the profound Anthologiſt triumphantly diſplays, as *his own* recollection; and employs, beſides, I know not how many pages, in a deſcription of the villa of Adrian, which may be ſaid to be *tediouſly minute*. The Boſton *Naturaliſt* muſt have miſſed whole pages at a time, when ſcrutinizing the *Hortus-Siccus* of Roman Ruin (no doubt) by unintentional inadvertence. I ſhall take him again for my guide, where he ſo *pertinently* exclaims,

"We cannot refrain from extracting the following ſinking, mock-heroic ſentiment:"

'I ſaw the ſun go down on the crumbling walls of the villa of Adrian; and, at ten o'clock at night, as I ſit, in a large room, ſcantily furniſhed, and hung round with the ſcrawls of wandering Travellers, hear the roar of the Anio, and my windows rattle with a riſing blaſt, *that whiſtles through the ſhattered columns of the Temple of Veſta*. It reminds me that I am alone, five thouſand miles from my own fireside. The thought is ſerious—it ſtops my rambling pen—*Farewell.*

The words in italics are *unaccountably* left out by the accurate Anthologiſt; and he commits the ſame *overſight* in quoting the Author upon the then quiet ſtate of Veſuvius, omitting, *the continual bubbling of the liquid lava*, which produced the ſound that reſembled the boiling of a cauldron.

As Controverters, in vouch'd texts, leave out
*Shrewd words, which might againſt them clear the doubt.**

Of the Author's deſcription of the coaſt of Baia, the Critic coolly ſays nothing, to leave room for *five* ample quotations of his *own*, from the Latin Poets, "on theſe ſubjects of pleaſant enquiry," to uſe the words of the Anthologiſt, which are ſo *remarkably* adapted to the ſublimity of Claſſical alluſion.

"Our Author," ſays the Critic (ſumming up the evidence againſt the Literary Offender, in the ſtyle of a Recorder of London, paſſing ſentence of death at the Old Bailey) "does not ſtand charged merely with having violated the laws of writing, he is ſtill more *criminal* by his forgery of words. This is a crime ſo *atrocious*, that we can receive no motion for the arreſt of judgment, and no petition for the extenſion of *pardon*. If the following are not words of his own formation, they are *Indianiſms* with which *we* are not acquainted; for their *length* we ſhould take them for the names of Indian roots. Swamped, inſurrectionary, importunacy, romantically."

The deciſions of ſo profound a Caſuiſt of ſuch *a learned Judge*,

A Daniel come to judgment! yea, a Daniel!†

will undoubtedly be confirmed in the High Court of Public Opinion, without exception, or appeal. I ſhall therefore leave theſe "atrocious" expreſſions, to ſuffer the puniſhment, juſtly, due, to their "unpardonable criminality:" though I muſt obſerve that the terms in which ſentence hath been paſſed upon them, remind me of the eloquent charges of Chief Juſtice Jefferies, under the merciful Commiſſion that condemned and executed the Abettors of Monmouth's Rebellion.

"The laughable application of the

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* Dr. Donne---Satire II, which is thus verified by Pope:

"As, in quotation, *ſhrewd Divines* leave out
"Thoſe words that would againſt them clear the doubt."

† Shakespeare---*Shylock* to Portia; when he awards *him* the forfeit of *his* bond.

wing terms," says the *hitherto* phlegmatic nthologist (*now* assuming a *humorous* tone) brings strongly to our mind the manner a Quack's prescription: siniſter ray, cuc cottages, transfixed waves, spiral proberances, monotony of silence, hillocks the Apennines, rainbow of a nave, initable taste of time."

These truly ridiculous and unmeaning xpressions actually occur in the following assages of our Author. I shall insert me of them at length; to remove *all* ubts of *my own* veracity, and *that of a ritic* in whose sagacious decisions I shall *er* be proud to concur.

'The Lake of Brientz is not so wide as that of hun, being hemmed in by stupendous precipices at descend almost perpendicularly to the water's ge, and render the navigation of it both difficult d dangerous. Dark clouds had already begun to ll round the loftiest peaks, and, as they descended ong the ravines, in whelming tornadoes, the last eam of sunshine—pale and colourless, shot *a sinister* athwart impending horrors. Night closed upon by degrees, and we dashed from wave to ave, in gloomy silence, till the moon arose "in ouded majesty," over the eastern ridges, and lightus to the place of our destination.'

'A Stranger, at his first visit to St. Peter's, curily glances over the marble columns, the brazen tes, and the stuccoed arches of the magnificent estibule; impatient to open upon the Middle Aisle, hundred feet long, ninety wide, and a hundred d fifty high. But at first sight of the Corinthian rcade, glittering in white and gold, it does not rike the disappointed Visitor, as very long, very ide, or very high; for neither length, breadth, nor eight predominate, in the dimensions of this peerss Nave; and he doubts, for a moment, whether yet beholds the largest, as well as the most beautiful Structure that ever was erected by human hands. e compares St. Peter's to the rival edifices of Lonon, Milan, or Constantinople; and scarcely does suspect his error, till he approaches one of the nts, and observes that the Cherubs which support em are chubby giants. He looks up again at the splendent vault, and discovers that he cannot disnctly perceive its variegated fret work. He turns eye across the marble pavement, and remarks that can scarcely hear the distant footstep, that slowly vances on the other side of the Nave.—He darts a ance of astonishment toward the golden tribune, at e west end of the temple, and if the setting sun umes the brazen Canopy that crowns the Altar of e Dome, and irradiates the flaming glories that round the Dove, descending on St. Peter's Chair, he approaches the *bending radiance*, it will seem to before him, *like the rainbow of a passing shower*.'—On entering, for the first time, this imposing edice, the eye is too much dazzled by the splendour of e Nave to remark its surrounding accompaniments, owever commensurate; and the most attentive obrver scarcely descries, athwart the vast arcades, the ulted roofs of the side chapels, glowing, at an wful elevation, with symbolic imagery, from the isions of Ezekiel, and the Revelations of John.—six elliptical compartments, three of them on either nd, are displayed, in brilliant mosaics, designed the first Masters, after the descriptions of the rophets and Evangelists, the splendid emblems of pernatural agency that visibly accompanied the romulgation of the Law, and the introduction of the ospel. The religious or poetical Enthusiast may and astonished under the flying-chariot of the river Chebar; or the throne set in heaven, of the isle of Patmos—the descending Glory that announced the promised Saviour, when he was baptized of John in Jordan; or the opening heavens—as when the martyr Stephen beheld the son of the Virgin, standing at the right hand of the Father Almighty. But *the rainbow of the Nave* is altogether independent of these sublime *emanations*; and you may *count its colours*, or *pursue its flight*, without ever perceiving the transcendant appendages.'

'Passing by the gate of St. Lawrence [in the suburbs of Rome] may be seen, within the walls, the ruined Temple of Minerva Medica, a majestic decagon, whose soaring dome, irregularly perforated by decay, and hung round with ivy, in *the inimitable taste of Time* and Nature, has long formed one of those picturesque objects, that Artists intuitively select for elegant imitation.'

I have now, *Mr. Editor*, gone through the remarks of this liberal and judicious Critic; and *make no doubt*, that *your* Readers will be satisfied (in the words of the Anthologist) that "when the turgid answers for the sublime, modern sentimental conceit for natural and unaffected passion, and hard words for peculiar ideas, the Pennsylvanian will be thought a good writer."

I am, Sir, Yours, to serve,

PETER POETASTER,

Professor of Hyper-Criticism in the University of Pennsylvania.

It is recorded by Quintus Curtius, that the Persians always conceived a lasting and invincible contempt of a man who had violated the laws of secrecy: for they thought, that, however he might be deficient in the qualities requisite to actual excellence, the negative virtues, at least, were always in his power, and though perhaps he could not speak well if he was to try, it was still easy for him not to speak.

In this opinion of the easiness of secrecy, they seem to have considered it as opposed, not to treachery, but loquacity, and to have considered the man, whom they thus censured, not frightened by menaces to reveal or bribed by promises to betray, but incited by the mere pleasure of talking, or some other motive equally trivial, to lay open his heart without reflection, and to let whatever he knew slip from him, only for want of power to retain it.

MERCHANTS.

There is not, says Addison, a more useful class of society than merchants. They knit mankind together in a mutual intercourse of good offices, distribute the gifts of nature, and increase the comforts and conveniences of life:

To censure trade,
Or hold her busy people in contempt,
Let none presume.
Trade, to the good physician gives his balms;
Gives cheering cordials to th' afflicted heart;
Gives to the wealthy, delicacies high;
Gives to the curious, works of nature rare;
And when the priest displays in just discourse,
Him, the allwise Creator, and declares
His presence, power, and goodness unconfin'd,
'Tis trade, attentive voyager, who fills,
His lips with argument.

"The mind," observes an elegant author of the present day, "the immortal mind, if its high-born faculties elevate us almost to its native heaven, while we are upon earth—if the wing of its fancy, and the thrilling sense of its feeling appear, in some degree, to anticipate the height and sensations of etherial beings, even yet while we are clogged with the weight of the grosser particles which compose this nether world, what a tax is levied on our supremacy! how do our trials augment with our talents, and our perils increase with our eminences."

SUMMARY OF INTELLIGENCE.

FOREIGN.—The Celtic Academy at Paris at one of its late meetings, submitted to the test an ingenious contrivance of one of its members which communicates the faculty of corresponding and conversing with persons of whose language you are entirely ignorant, without any preliminary study, without expence, embarrassment, or the least mental exertions. It was tried by 25 Academicians on the European languages, and this trial demonstrated, that by means of this discovery, a person may travel wherever he pleases without an interpreter, that he may ask for every thing he wants, converse on every kind of subject interesting to a traveller, and even express metaphysical ideas. This process is intended to be made public.

Letters from Paris, lately received, state, that Jerome Bonaparte, has to espouse a Spanish Princess.

Private letters by the Hampden, arrived at Boston, state, that there was not the most distant prospect of peace in Europe; that the views of the administration, governed and directed as they appeared to be by recent intelligence from the continent, were directly opposed to any overtures for an accommodation.

In commenting on the language of Mr. Fox, the English writers agree, that there is no hope of an early negociation of peace with France; but on the contrary, that war must continue, while the ambition of Bonaparte remained unsatiated. They further state, that fears are now entertained of a conspiracy between France and Prussia, for the dethronement of the king of Sweden, and that it is

probable the order for embargoing all Prussian vessels, was grounded on the certain knowledge of this connexion.

The French have withdrawn their troops from Hanover, and the whole country taken possession of by Prussia.

The mission of the Duke of Brunswick to Petersburg is said to have failed. The object of it was believed to have been to reconcile the Emperor Alexander to the conduct of the Prussian cabinet, and to prevail on him to withdraw his troops from Poland. The Duke has returned to Berlin.

It is very evident that Prussia is completely under the controul of France: and that her alliance will end in her subjugation by that power. The possession of Hanover, however it may give to Prussia a larger extent of territory and population than she has ceded, is no real equivalent for being thrust back from the Rhine to the Weser, for the loss of the important posts of Cleves and Wesel, for having a French Prince placed as a kind of watch and centinel at her gates, and for the rapid decline of her influence over the Elector of Hesse, and possibly the Elector of Saxony.

The principal part of the kingdom of Naples has been subdued by the French; the Calabrese have yielded, the fortress of Gaeta alone remains unsubdued. An attempt is contemplated against Sicily, defended as it is by British troops, and guarded by a British squadron.

The expedition under Sir James Craig, was at Messina the middle of February.

A French squadron of considerable force has been on the coast of Africa, and made many valuable captures.

Some Prussian ships with troops and heavy artillery on board, have appeared before Hamburg, to protect her, as the vulture does the lamb.

The French troops still in Germany are estimated at 200,000 men.

The Emperor Napoleon, as Grand master of the order of the Iron crown, has conferred the grand insignia of that order on his Highness Prince Eugenius Napoleon of France, Deputy King of Naples, his son; on Prince Joseph Napoleon, and on Prince Louis, his brothers; and on the Princes Murat and Burghesse, his brothers in law.

Marshal Jourdan, is to take command in the city of Naples.

Marshal Bernadotte has been presented by Bonaparte with the royal palace and domain of Trieladorf, in Anspach.

It is not only on the Polish frontier that Russia is assembling a formidable army; she is also making preparations in Moldavia and Wallachia to resist the storm with which the Turkish provinces are menaced. The king of Bavaria has been obliged to send troops to the Tyrol, to prevent an insurrection; and at Trieste the inhabitants have ventured to come to blows with the French garrison.

DOMESTIC.

Buildings and Inhabitants of Philadelphia.

The dwelling houses of the city have been enumerated at the following periods, and the curious will no doubt be gratified by the information.

		Houses.
In 1749, The City contained by enumeration,	1864	
Southern suburbs to Love lane,	150	
Northern do. to Stacy's Run,	62	
		2076
In 1753 City and suburbs as above,		2300
In 1760 City and suburbs do.		2969
In 1769 City contained by enumeration	3318	
Southern suburbs to Love-Lane,	603	
Northern do. to Stacy's Run,	553	
		4474
In 1783 City and suburbs contained		6000
In 1805 We are indebted to Mr. Robinson's industry for the information contained in his Directory for 1806, by which it appears that the number of houses in the city and suburbs, fronting upon streets, alleys, and courts, amounts to	12461	
Add for houses standing back from the street,	1000	
		13461

All the above enumerations, contain the dwelling houses only, and are exclusive of places for worship, and all other public buildings—13461 houses at 8 person's to each, gives the present number of inhabitants at 107,688. S.

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We lately noticed, says the Norfolk Ledger, the destruction occasioned by the fire in the Great Dismal Swamp, which we are sorry to learn, continues to rage with unabated violence, carrying destruction in every direction.

Intending if we can procure it, to publish a full and particular account of this conflagration, we shall not at this time state some facts relative to it, nor offer some reflections which they have suggested.

The consequences have been, and still continue to be very seriously felt by the inhabitants residing near the Swamp; the heated atmosphere occasioned by, and the smoke proceeding from, such an immense body of fire, have rendered their habitations almost insupportable. These effects have been for some days past (though in a lesser degree) extended to this place and Portsmouth, and at this moment occasion much inconvenience, and are productive of all the disagreeable sensations which heat and smoke may be supposed to occasion.

At the moment we are writing, and for the last two days, the wind has been to the southward, which setting the smoke directly on this place, the sun has been only at times visible, and the horizon contracted to not more than a mile distant, often not more than half a mile, and sometimes we have not been able to see three hundred yards.

The captains who have lately arrived, inform us, that on approaching the land, they experienced great inconvenience, and were exposed to some dangers from the same circumstance; they state that it was at times so thick from the smoke, that they could not see a mile a-head.

The Pilots also find difficulty in conducting the vessels up and down the river.

A change of wind will relieve the inhabitants of the towns for the present, but nothing but rain, (which is so devoutly to be desired for this and other reasons) can remedy the mischief effectually.

A Danville (Kentucky) paper of the 22d of April, says, that three or four Virginia mails are due; and judging by the abundance of rain which has lately fallen, we do not expect to get the next in due time.

Four cargoes of HUMAN FLESH, imported in the ships Robert, Gustavia, George, and brig Neptune, are (to the disgrace of our country) advertised for sale in the Charleston Courier of the 1st instant. They consist of 835 African negroes who are said to be PRIME.

A letter from Washington states that "the Tunisian minister in the course of a few days will set out from Washington for the purpose of visiting some of our great cities. He will be accompanied by our late consul at Tripoli, Mr. Cathcart."

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

We are sorry PAUL POETASTER has spoiled his piece by twisting it into rhyme; had his sentiments been expressed in prose, or better poetry, they might have been inserted.

We again request that our correspondents who favor us with selections, would be particular to note them as such, as we wish not to publish any thing as original but what is really so. MIRANDA's sonnets, and some other productions lately received, bearing the stamp of originality, have been suppressed principally on that account, as we had reason to suspect them for being selections.

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